United Nations E/CN.6/2000/NGO/3

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
14 January 2000

Original: English

Commission on the Status of Women

Forty-fourth session
28 February-2 March 2000
Item 3 (c) of the provisional agenda*
Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women: implementation of strategic objectives and action in the critical areas of concern

Statement submitted by Zonta International, a non-governmental organization in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 26 July 1996.

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Zonta International, an organization of executive professionals whose objectives include to improve the legal, political, economic, education health and professional status of women, is working to support the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women.

Zonta International has focused particular attention on the issue of violence against women. Beginning in 1995, when the Zonta International summit on violence against women increased member and media awareness of many facets of violence against women, Zonta International has expanded its commitment to the prevention and elimination of gender-based violence. Through its international project with the United States Committee for UNICEF, it is endeavouring to dramatically reduce the practice of female genital circumcision in Burkina Faso, thus furthering its commitment to the improvement of women's health and supporting women's human rights. Through the establishment of grants to Zonta clubs around the world who cooperate with local organizations that provide mediation training for children to foster the development of violence-free relationships, Zonta International is promoting gender equality, education and violence reduction.

Other Zonta International programmes have addressed the implementation of the 12 critical areas of concern identified in the Platform for Action. Our project with the United States Committee for UNICEF for girls' education in the northern provinces of South Africa as well as Zonta International's young women in public affairs awards, which are given to encourage leadership and commitment to service, have advanced the situation of girl children. Our Amelia Earhart fellowships have provided an opportunity to hundreds of women to pursue graduate studies in aerospace and engineering, promoting education and training in math and science. Our Jane M. Klaussman awards offer advancement to women students in business.

Zonta International looks forward to working with the United Nations and other non-governmental organizations in the new millennium to provide global and local service, to promote justice and universal respect for human rights, to actualize gender equality

* E/CN.6/2000/1.

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for women, and to work for the advancement of understanding and peace throughout the world.